

KWANONGOMO COLLEGE, BULAWAYO

by Mr. Leslie Williamson, *Director*

"Kwanongoma—the 'Place of Music'—was opened in 1961 for the purpose of training African musicians and, in particular, African music teachers. It is the first venture of its kind in Southern Rhodesia and, as will be seen from the Syllabus, the work done covers a wide field of studies in which indigenous music plays a large part.

"The use of specialist music teachers in African schools will enable the staff at present handling school music, to the best of their usually limited capacity, to be released for the work for which they have primarily been trained. The inclusion of English, and especially speech training, in the curriculum is of particular advantage, both in relation to the study of singing and to the spoken word. A contribution to general teacher shortage will thus be made and, at the same time, Music, which means so much to the African people, will be handled by adequately qualified staff.

"The encouragement, too, of an informed study of the worthwhile elements of indigenous idioms is a very vital necessity, if these are not to be brushed aside by a community subjected to the indifferent noises of modern mechanical reproduction imported from elsewhere.

"The discovery, by youth, of the folk-music to which it is heir, together with a musical literacy which will enable the art of various tribes and peoples to be understood, appreciated and developed, may play a large part not only in creating a specifically Rhodesian art-form but also in engendering a consciousness of true worth by contributing from African resources, some part of the make-up of the fully educated man.

"Kwanongoma produces not only Teachers but also workers in Youth Clubs and other Community music organisers and performing musicians in their own right. Those seeking ultimate recognition as Teachers are required to possess a full Junior Certificate before the course commences, while others should have passed Standard VI and, preferably, have progressed beyond that level before leaving school.

"It is with the foregoing aims that Kwanongoma College is offered to the African peoples as a focal point for a new African Musical Scholarship, which will create a cultural awareness that will entitle them to the respect of the civilised world."

Syllabus for Two Year Full-time Music Teachers' Training Course

Theoretical Subjects

Theory of Music—During the first year Grades I to V of the Associated Board together with a full appreciation of Tonic sol-fa and the transcription of tonic sol-fa into staff notation and vice-versa. Key signatures, time signatures, etc. Simple transcription from performance. In the second year the study of Harmony and Counterpoint is introduced, progress depending on the ability of the individual student. The approach to this advanced work is experimental, in that it is not desired to impose a purely European idiom upon the Students but rather to encourage the flowering of their own cultural background.

Aural Training

Recognition of intervals, chords and time relationships, and the thorough understanding of rhythmic patterns as seen in staff notation and, as heard, in staff notation.

History of Music

The development of music in Europe from the Greek modes onwards through the impact of Counterpoint and Harmony. Development of Opera, oratorio and ballet. Development of musical instruments and the modern orchestra. Relations between music and social life in different countries through the ages and the development of music as a social force in African society.

Musical Appreciation

An intimate and intelligent study of the great works of music of all countries. The study of the various forms that music has taken through the centuries in different parts of the world. A special study of African Music.

Acoustics

The elementary stages of this subject are taken.

Practical Subjects

Voice Production

Study of the vocal organs. Relation between speech sounds and singing. Pronunciation in song. Use of the voice in developing quality and intensity of tone. Singers receive special instruction.

Piano

The training in piano playing is directed towards a good working acquaintance with the keyboard as the most useful medium for the study of music and musical theory generally.

Guitar

This instrument is taught with the intention of assisting teachers in cases where no piano is available at schools and also of developing a broader understanding of music.

African Marimba

Training in the playing and making of this indigenous instrument is undertaken fully.

African Drums

Are an essential part of the course, and instruction is given in playing, tuning and maintenance of the instruments.

Flute (or Fife)

Being valuable as a fixed pitch instrument when no piano is available in schools. The Melodica (not Harmonica) is also being used as a means to this end.

*Ensemble Work**Choral Singing*

With full choir, in the Vernacular and in English, progressing towards operatic and oratorio work and the development of the operatic medium with African environment.

African Drum and Marimba Orchestra

Various combinations of instruments are integrated in the preservation, performance and development of African Music. Public performances are regularly given by choir and the orchestra, giving valuable experience to the students.

English

The course in English is directed to the P.T.H. examination of the African Education Department. It is, however, proposed that this course be re-orientated to embrace more specific instruction as applied to the music course. e.g. Speech training, drama and literature.

Teaching Practice

- (a) Planning progressive school lessons in notes.
- (b) Work on practical aids to teaching. e.g. music charts, Melodica, chime bars, etc.
- (c) Blackboard work, writing, etc.
- (d) Song repertoire, English and Indigenous.
- (e) School administration and organisation.

During the Second Year, teaching practice in schools is organised and the emphasis is on gaining first-hand experience.